COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

RECORD

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Six Ontario universities awarded eight new chairs in public policy

$25 million in endowments will boost research at universities and support innovation in the province

In the 2005 Ontario budget, the government committed $25 million to the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) to create eight new Ontario Research Chairs in Public Policy. On February 16, 2006, it was announced that the following universities will be awarded chairs under the program:

- McMaster University, one chair in Education Policy and At-Risk Students
- Queen's University, one chair in Health
- University of Toronto, three chairs: Research in Disease Management, Health Policy and System Design; and Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement
- University of Waterloo, one chair in Environmental Policy and Business and Energy
- University of Windsor, one chair in Cross-Border Transportation Policy; and
- York University, one chair in Economics and Cross-Cultural Studies.

"Our universities play a vital role in helping unlock Ontario's creative potential," said Premier Dalton McGuinty, who also serves as Minister of Research and Innovation. "Creating Ontario Research Chairs demonstrates our government's commitment to helping make our province a leading force in a knowledge-based economy."

The six universities chosen for awards were selected by an advisory board which included leaders from business, labour and academia. It is expected that the value of the government's investment will be supported within the next two years by additional funding from universities and their private partners.

"Ontario needs to continue to be a world leader in research to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage and create a culture of innovation in the province," said Chris Bentley, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. "With the new Ontario Research Chairs we are increasing the number of leading policy experts here in our universities and investing in the most talented of graduates and researchers who will help us unlock our potential for the future."

Of the 39 perfect scores received from panels in the province this year, eligible for the program, 14 chairs and a total of 27 proposals were selected. Chaired by Dr. Arvind Gupta, Senior Vice-President and CEO of the Canada Foundation for Innovation and Vice-President of the University of British Columbia.

Dr. Gupta said that Ontario universities responded ballistically to the request for proposals. "Only eight chairs could be funded, the finalists were very hard. The panel was tasked that at least three 39 proposals were mentioned that they would meet overall quality for funding.

COU President Bob Rae said, "We are confident that work done by these eight key public policy chairs will be of critical benefit to the province over the next decade and beyond. We salute the government for its leadership and its commitment to investing in the public interest."

The Selection Committee also awarded the proposals for Aboriginal Health and Wellness and Aboriginal Education. The Chair selection committee, the eight-member Selection Committee for Ontario Research Chairs in Public Policy, was co-chaired by Dr. Arthur May, Vice-President of Memorial University and former President of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and Dr. David Strangway, President Emeritus of Vancouver Community College and former President of the University of Manitoba. Dr. Harry Swain, a senior policy consultant and former Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The next application call for proposals is expected this coming [illegible] Chair applications is January 1, 2007. All applications must be for nationwide searches for scholars of high calibre to establish leadership in policy research in the areas of [illegible] outlined, preparing graduate students to participate in the public policy field. Applications will be considered for research [illegible].

For more information on the above programs and process, [illegible] visit the web site at http://www.cou.on.ca.

Former Premier Bob Rae receives Smith Award for contributions to higher education policy in Ontario and beyond

Calls for more autonomy for universities

Bob Rae, former Premier of Ontario, was the recipient of the 2005 David C. Smith Award for Significant Contributions to Scholarship and Policy on Higher Education in Canada presented at a dinner ceremony in mid-December that was attended by invited members of the university and government communities. The award was established by COU in memory of the late Dr. Smith, who worked with great distinction to advance the cause of higher education as Principal of Queen's University, Chair of COU, and [illegible] of the provincial government's [illegible] Council on Higher Education. Dave Smith, [illegible] outstanding [illegible] many other distinguished roles.

[illegible]

In 2004, Mr. Rae was appointed Advisor to Premier McGuinty and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. In this capacity he was commissioned to lead a review of the province's postsecondary education sector and recommend a framework to ensure the system's high quality, accountability and affordability. Mr. Rae's experience in negotiation, mediation and arbitration, combined with his consultative style on issues of public policy, were tailor-made for the task. He actively engaged Ontarians across the province in dialogue – an important dimension of his review process.

After three months of consultation, discussion, research and analysis, Mr. Rae – supported in his work by a seven-member Advisory Panel – provided a set of sweeping recommendations for transforming Ontario into a first-class educational jurisdiction, which he detailed in his ground-breaking report, *Ontario: A Leader in Learning*, submitted to the government early in 2005.

The result: The provincial government made education one of its top priorities in its spring 2005 budget, implementing measures that reflect many of the review's far-reaching recommendations for a new postsecondary education framework. The budget's financial boost to postsecondary education and training was the biggest in 40 years.

After accepting his award from the Rev. Mary Smith, Dr. Smith's widow, Mr. Rae followed the tradition of past recipients by delivering an address on issues affecting higher education. Mr. Rae called for a new model of governance for universities that devolves more autonomy to individual institutions. He also made the case that low tuition is not the answer to keeping university education accessible.

Beware of micromanagement

Mr. Rae acknowledged that universities face a constant challenge to acquire the money and resources they need from governments – although last year's provincial budget and allocation of $6.2 billion to the postsecondary sector and training was "a huge step forward." But on the governance side, both provincial and federal governments have a long, more difficult road ahead because, in Mr. Rae's opinion, the highly centralized model of governance that he grew up with, studied under, and overseas as premier, does not work.

Mr. Rae proposed another model in which "governments provide a framework, a sense of leadership and the atmosphere in which institutions can govern themselves." That framework should enable government to "create a culture, incentives and investment" to look at "the bigger picture" of what universities are trying to do and "focus on how as a government we can get there." But government can't do that and run institutions from the centre at the same time, he said.

"There's a rigour that has to be appreciated as central to the mission of education. There's no avoiding it. Our egalitarian instinct should apply in every sense to making sure that the access – the door to this world – is really open. Governments should be doing everything they can to provide that opportunity, so that students can enter this wonderful world of learning and imagination. But the egalitarian mentality or spirit should not apply to insisting that every institution be exactly the same."

Lower tuition does *not* guarantee more access

And although it flies in the face of current popular opinion, Mr. Rae reiterated that he does not support lowering tuition to solve what he views as a more complex set of problems. "People say that if you want to have more access to the system you have to lower tuition. Actually that's not true. The evidence around the world is pretty clear that low or tuition does not guarantee more access. They don't have better access in France or in countries that have lower tuition than we do. The problem is access, and the problem is finance, and the problem is affordability. They're not the same."

Real solutions, he suggests, will be found by giving institutions the freedom to evolve and excel in different ways. "Let's not hold the institutions down, and hinder their ability to do well and to be great. Inevitably education is about excellence. Our culture should not be afraid of the word."

Mr. Rae tipped his hat to Dr. Smith by advising his listeners that "if you go back and read the Smith report [Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility, which detailed the findings and recommendations of the 1996 postsecondary education review], which everyone should do, just about every good idea with respect to what needs to be done is in it. Some of that work has been advanced by what I've done, and I am very proud to have been a part of that effort."

Mr. Rae is currently a partner at Goodmans, an Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto and a Senior Fellow at Massey College. He was named a Queen's Counsel in 1984, appointed to Her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada in 1998, and made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2000 and an Officer of the Order of Ontario in 2001. He also serves as Chancellor of Wilfrid Laurier University.

Both a video recording and an edited transcript of Mr. Rae's unscripted remarks are available on COU's web site (www.cou.on.ca). There is also a limited-edition DVD in production that features Mr. Rae's remarks (in both video and hard-copy formats), biographies of the late Dr. Smith and all recipients of the award to date, and transcripts of lectures delivered by award recipients.

Research success stories: 4th edition published, posted, fully searchable

In 2005, the Ontario Council on University Research published its fourth edition of university research success stories (published annually since 2002 under the title *A Sampling of Success Stories*). The latest edition offers more than 100 profiles of research, discovery and innovation, reflecting the combined efforts of faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students across Ontario's university sector. Once again, the rich variety of stories illustrates the important contribution that university research makes to the health, economic well-being and quality of life of all Ontarians.

In a new development, individual stories from the last three editions are now an ongoing, rotating feature on COU's home page (www.cou.on.ca), where a new research success story, randomly chosen from each university, is showcased daily.

Funding from the federal and provincial governments, various granting agencies, foundations and private-sector partners continues to position Ontario's publicly assisted universities as leaders in research and discovery.

eINFO provides online searchable resource for students

INFO magazine, the comprehensive guide to Ontario universities for secondary school students and guidance counsellors published by the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC), launched a web counterpart called *eINFO* in fall 2005. The first step in a three-year plan, this new web site (www.electronicinfo.ca) provides the Degree Locator and Programs of Study charts in an online searchable format.

By fall 2006, more searchable charts and tables will be added, and by fall 2007, OUAC expects that the *eINFO* web site will be fully searchable and that *INFO* magazine will be scaled down to a companion guide that directs university-bound students to the web site. During this process, the *eINFO* web site will continue to feature a PDF version of the magazine that can be downloaded.

Steering Committee will oversee participation of Ontario universities in a major survey

In 2000, Indiana University's Center for Survey Research, under the sponsorship of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning, launched the inaugural National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to some 276 colleges and universities in the U.S. Since then, the NSSE project has grown substantially, not only in the number of participating institutions (which has almost doubled) but also in geographical reach. Seven Ontario universities participated in the survey in 2004; all 19 of the province's publicly funded universities will take part in the 2006 survey.

The purpose of NSSE is to collect information directly from undergraduates about the quality of their college or university experience, measured by their participation in the types of activities that lead to effective learning and personal growth. Measures of student engagement range from the level of classroom participation and interaction with faculty to involvement in enriching extracurricular activities. Each participating institution receives, in the form of a standardized report, important feedback that they can use to refine their policies and practices to become more educationally effective.

In spring 2005, COU set up the NSSE Steering Committee, chaired by Jamie MacLeay, COU's Vice-President, Policy and Analysis, to oversee the Ontario NSSE consortium to prepare for the full participation of Ontario universities in the survey. It is hoped that Ontario universities will participate in NSSE every two or three years to help support their common focus, shared with government, on improving quality and accountability.

Minister Bentley attends meeting of CCOU and Executive Heads

On February 24, 2006, Alan W. Bentley, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, participated in the first joint meeting of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and Executive Heads. The meeting was held in the Senate Chamber at Massey College, University of Toronto. Mr. Bentley, COU Chair David Strangway, President Emeritus of the University of Toronto, and Executive Heads Chair Lorna Marsden, President of Wilfrid Laurier University, discussed a number of issues affecting the university sector.

Call for renewal of campus facilities

COU submits its case to Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

On February 1, 2006, COU submitted a brief to the provincial Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs outlining the university sector's need for renewal of campus facilities. This issue has been made much more urgent by the unabated growth in demand for university education. It is estimated that 435,000 undergraduate students will be enrolled at Ontario universities by 2011, an increase of well over 50% in the span of a decade.

The *Reaching Higher* initiatives announced in the 2005 Budget have put Ontario universities in a much stronger position to serve the growing numbers of students, through such new investments as $220 million annually to fund an additional 14,000 graduate students by 2009-2010 and $358 million in student financial assistance by 2009-2010. However, funding for the renewal of campus facilities and infrastructure is not keeping pace with rising enrolments and is, in fact, lagging dangerously behind the growing pressures on the universities' physical resources.

In Ontario today, there are some 1,000 university buildings totalling approximately 53 million square metres of academic and administrative facilities across 23 campuses. Their average age is more than 30 years old – the age that typically calls for major renewal investments. Of the buildings assessed in the 2005 physical condition audit overseen by two COU affiliates (the Council of Senior Administrative Officers and the Ontario Association of Physical Plant Administrators), almost half were considered to be in poor state.

In 2005 the Ontario government provided an additional $133.7 million in funding to its ongoing facilities renewal programs, and Ontario universities welcomed the one-time infusion. The ongoing program, however, allocates only $26.7 million annually for facilities renewal, a sum that falls far short of the estimated $260 million needed every year to minimally maintain and upgrade university buildings. Rising enrolments are not the only reason why the universities' physical plants are under strain. There are facility and infrastructure pressures related to research funding, including funding for the indirect costs of research and ever-increasing utilities budgets.

As the exact notes, Ontario universities are facing $1.77 billion in costs for deferred maintenance and adaptation renovations to academic and administrative facilities. Adding another $920 for the cost of repairing or replacing infrastructure (steam, power and water distribution systems), the total figure moves closer to $2 billion. The longer this deferred maintenance problem is left unchecked, the more expensive it will become to correct and the more difficult it will be for Ontario universities to provide the kind of academic environment that supports a quality learning experience.

For a copy of COU's *Submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs*, visit the COU web site (www.cou.on.ca).

Universities feel space squeeze

COU recently published the 2004-2005 edition of the triennial report, *Inventory of Physical Facilities of Ontario Universities*. The report provides data by institution on 20 categories of actual and generated space (based on COU space standards) as of November 1, 2004. In the three years between the 2001-2002 and 2004-2005 inventory reports, Ontario universities have seen a 26% increase in FTE (full-time equivalent) enrolment due to the double cohort and rising participation rates, an 18.7% increase in FTE faculty and an 11.6% increase in inventory due to a significant investment in capital projects in preparation for the double cohort.

The ratio of actual inventory to the recommended space requirement is 73% (in 2001-2002, the ratio was 78.2%). Ratios of less than 100% mean that the actual inventory is less than the (recommended for generated) inventory according to COU standards. The ratio of actual space per FTE student is 8.6 NASM (net assignable square meters), the lowest rate since COU has been producing this report.

For a copy of *Inventory of Physical Facilities of Ontario Universities 2004-05*, visit COU's web site (www.cou.on.ca).

U of Ottawa wins Teaching with Technology innovation award for third year in a row

Some members of the winning University of Ottawa team (l-r) Richard Pinet, André Séguin and Rémi Rousseau, and on screen, Marc Bélanger, Nicolas Hosler.

A team from the University of Ottawa was honoured with the 2005 Award for Excellence in Teaching with Technology – the third consecutive year that Ottawa faculty have netted this award. The awards program, established four years ago by COU, recognizes faculty who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in using technology to enhance their teaching.

The 2005 award winner for a program developed for undergraduate or graduate students is a team from the university's Centre for e-Learning (Centre du cyberapprentissage de l'Université d'Ottawa et le Programme de partenariat parental de l'est et du sud-est de l'Ontario). The program was *Nursing Care for the At-Risk Newborn* (or *Soins infirmiers du nouveau-né à risque*).

The winning team, led by project leader and pedagogical designer Rémi Rousseau, consisted of Marc Bélanger, George Dyrenyi, Sandra Dunn, Nicolas Hosler, Mireille Leblanc, Julie Lefebvre, Richard Pinet, André Séguin and Vicky Ward. They were presented with the award, valued at $5,000, at a reception held in Ottawa on November 18, 2005. CGI Group, IBM and Sun Microsystems of Canada are sponsors of the awards program.

Ontario universities take part in premiers' summit

From February 23 to 24, 2006, the Council of the Federation – made up of all 13 provincial and territorial premiers – held a summit on five areas of common priority, including postsecondary education and skills training. Premiers Dalton McGuinty and Jean Charest, who had previously co-chaired a special meeting of provincial and territorial ministers responsible for postsecondary education, skills training and finance in October 2005, were co-chairs of the summit.

More than 300 stakeholders representing students, colleges, universities, business, labour, and provinces and territories were invited to participate in discussions that explored key issues and challenges in postsecondary education and skills training. Representatives of many Ontario universities attended. The provinces hope to see outcomes from the summit to call on the new federal government to deliver re-election promises to address fiscal imbalances, and to be better able to plot the course for education and skills training systems into the future.

Ross Paul assumes role as Chair of Council

Ross Paul, a member of COU since 1991 and former Vice-Chair of Council, assumed the role of Chair on July 1, 2005.

Dr. Paul was appointed President and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Windsor in 1996 and reappointed for a second term in 2001. Prior to his Windsor appointment, he served as President of Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, for almost seven years. A bilingual native of Montreal, Dr. Paul has teaching and senior administrative experience at all levels of education.

Dr. Paul represents Canada's universities on the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council and is a member of the board of AUTO21, the Network of Centres of Excellence for advanced automotive research and development. He serves on the Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture in Ontario. He is past Chair of the boards of World University Service of Canada and the Optical Research Advanced Network of Ontario. He was the founding President of CREAO (Center for Research, Evaluation, Assessment, and Documentation) and served as Vice President (North America) for the International Council for Distance Education.

He has travelled and consulted widely on management and distance education issues, and has also authored numerous books and articles on the management of technology and higher learning. A graduate of Bishop's, McGill and London universities, Dr. Paul has particular interest in the sociology of organizations and the management of higher education. He was awarded the Governor General's Medal for the 125th Anniversary of Confederation in 1992 and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002.

He succeeds Dr. Richard Van Loon, who completed his term as Chair of Council on June 30, 2005 and subsequently retired as President of Carleton University on July 31, 2005.

Appointment of new Executive Heads

David Atkinson: President of Carleton University
On August 1, 2005, Dr. David Atkinson took office as President and Vice-Chancellor of Carleton University. He succeeds Dr. Richard Van Loon, who retired at the end of his term.

Sheldon Levy: President of Ryerson University
On August 1, 2005, Sheldon Levy became the President and Vice-Chancellor of Ryerson University. He succeeds Dr. Claude Lajeunesse, who assumed the presidency of Concordia University on completion of his Ryerson term in office.

David Naylor: President of the University of Toronto
On October 1, 2005, Dr. David Naylor, former Dean of Medicine and Vice-Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions, at the University of Toronto, assumed the presidency of the university. He succeeds the Honourable Frank Iacobucci, who served as Interim President for one year.

Terrance Boak: Acting President of Brock University
On August 1, 2005, Dr. Terrance Boak took office as Acting President and Vice-Chancellor of Brock University, for a period of one year. The appointment of Dr. Jack Lightstone as the next president has since been announced.

Sara Diamond: President of the Ontario College of Art & Design
On July 1, 2005, Sara Diamond took office as President of the Ontario College of Art & Design. She succeeds Ron Shuebrook, who began a one-year sabbatical to pursue his art practice full-time.

Innovation award for Ontario Scholars Portal

The Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) was honoured with the 2005 Innovation Achievement Award by the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries for its exceptional achievement in developing the Ontario Scholars Portal. The award was presented at the 59th annual Canadian Library Association Meeting, held in Calgary on June 16, 2005.

The Ontario Scholars Portal is a remarkable collaborative achievement, involving provincial, federal and institutional co-operation. The portal is an information infrastructure to support digital content that serves research, teaching and learning at universities across Ontario.

Leslie Weir, Chief Librarian at the University of Ottawa, and Exec Abrams, Project Officer at the University of Waterloo, accepted the award on behalf of OCUL. The $1,500 gift that accompanies the award, sponsored by the SIRSI Corporation, will be used to create a Scholars Portal sub-endnip.

Record-breaking attendance at 2005 Ontario Universities' Fair

A record-breaking crowd of 83,500 people attended the ninth annual Ontario Universities' Fair, held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre from September 30 to October 2, 2005 – up by over 8,000 from last year's fair. All of Ontario's universities as well as the Ontario College of Art & Design and the Royal Military College of Canada were represented at the admissions fair event.

Universities staffed exhibition booths with professors, students and admissions and student services representatives to answer visitors' questions, held hourly information sessions in faculty presentation rooms, and handed out volumes of take-away materials to students and parents.

A group of volunteers from the Korean community, chaired by Liam Mitchell of the University of Toronto, co-ordinated the event. The fair is the Toronto leg of the province-wide Universities' Information Program organized by the Steering Committee on Secondary School Liaison.

OUAC statistics in: Secondary school applications on the rise

Ontario secondary school students applied to Ontario universities in greater numbers this year than last, according to the February report released by the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC). As of February 10, 2006, a total of 76,340 secondary school applicants – an increase of 3.2% over 2005 – had made 335,344 application choices for full-time admission for fall 2006. The average number of choices per applicant (4.4) remained the same as last year.

Leading up to the January 31th application deadline, OUAC's computer systems handled 16,700 applications from January 9 to 11, and on January 10, OUAC experienced the heaviest volume of applications in the Centre's history, with 8,636 applications processed in one day. Staff from the Centre's help desk also worked additional days and evenings during December and January to assist applicants who were experiencing difficulties in applying online.

OUAC continues to receive and process applications for students applying to Ontario universities for fall 2006 admission, and regular statistical updates will be made available on OUAC's web site (www.ouac.on.ca/statistics/applications/index.html) in the coming months.

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Listing of Committees Associated with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU)

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